



recycle@  
townof  
northandover.com

Summer 2006



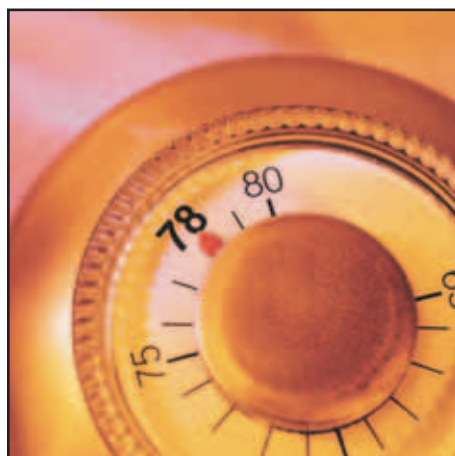
# Keep the mercury from rising

Mercury can be found throughout your home—in thermometers, thermostats, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, and more. During use, this mercury is sealed inside the products. However, if one of these items breaks or if a mercury-containing product is disposed with household trash, the mercury escapes. Once that happens, the mercury can pollute our air or waterways.

This mercury pollution needs to be taken seriously because it can cause harm to the brain and nervous system of humans and wildlife. Children are particularly at risk.

Follow these simple guidelines to make your home safer and to keep our air and water clean:

- Know what items in your home may contain mercury (see box). Remember—if in doubt, assume that the item does contain mercury.
- Do not touch or vacuum spilled mercury. If a mercury-containing item, such as a fever thermometer, breaks, get everyone out of the room, open a window, remove jewelry, and put on rubber gloves. Then, use a piece of



- cardboard to pick up the mercury and place the mercury and everything it touched into a tightly sealed container. For more detailed instructions, go to [www.mass.gov/dep/images/spill.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dep/images/spill.pdf). Print this page and keep it with other safety information in your home.
- Choose products without mercury whenever possible. Digital or forehead fever thermometers are mercury-free. Digital thermostats are also mercury-free. Select fluorescent bulbs and then

dispose of them properly.

- Never pour mercury-containing products down the drain or dump them into the trash. Dispose of all mercury-containing products properly.
- Be aware of fish consumption advisories. Mercury in the water accumulates in the tissue of fish. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health issues a statewide fish consumption advisory which recommends that



pregnant women avoid eating freshwater fish caught anywhere in Massachusetts. In addition, some water bodies have mercury levels so high that fish caught there would also be dangerous to the general public. Both Lake Cochichewick and Stevens Pond have advisories for largemouth bass. For details, see <http://db.state.ma.us/dph/fishadvisory/>.

## Common Household Items That May Contain Mercury

Thermometers (fever, candy, deep fryer, oven, indoor, and outdoor with a silvery temperature indicator)

Thermostats (non-electronic/non-digital)

Barometers

Fluorescent lamps and high-intensity discharge (HID) lamps

Appliances with a pilot light, such as ovens, clothes dryers, water heaters, and furnaces

Button batteries from hearing aids, calculators, and watches

Old batteries (any household batteries if produced prior to 1990)

Clothes irons with a tilt safety switch

For more information, visit [www.mass.gov/dep/images/products.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dep/images/products.pdf) or [www.KeepMercuryFromRising.org](http://www.KeepMercuryFromRising.org).

## Battery basics



Prior to 1994, all household alkaline batteries (AAA, AA, C, and D) contained some mercury. However, alkaline batteries made since then contain no mercury. While these newer batteries still contain metal and are corrosive should they leak, they can be placed into the trash for incineration or landfilling. Remember—you can only place these batteries in the trash if you find the word “alkaline,” if the you see the words “mercury free,” or if you see the ever-



green tree logo.

Many other household batteries should NOT be placed into your trash. These include all button (hearing aid, watch, and calculator batteries), rechargeable, nickel-cadmium (NiCd), nickel-metal hydride, and lithium ion batteries. Please dispose of these batteries at the Department of Public Works Monday to Friday during regular office hours or the third Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to noon.

## Scrap Metal now accepted for recycling

Scrap metal recycling is now available on the third Saturday of the month, from 9 a.m. until noon, at the Department of Public Works! In addition to the other services provided on the third Saturday of each month, residents can now drop off scrap metal, such as an old, dismantled metal shed, old metal shelving, andirons, fireplace tools, and much more. If you have an old gas grill, dispose of the propane tank for \$2 and put the rest into the scrap metal container at no charge.

DPW workers will be on-site to direct you. Please note—this does not include

appliances. The process for disposing of an appliance remains the same. An appointment for curbside collection is scheduled once your check is received by the DPW. Check the website for an Appliance Pickup Request Form. The town must pay to recycle appliances, a cost which is not funded in the DPW budget, so we will need to continue to pay \$30 for Freon-containing appliances such as refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, and dehumidifiers. The fee for non-Freon-containing appliances, such as washers, dryers, ovens, and dishwashers, and other heavy, metal items is \$25.

## Shedding some light on fluorescents



Lighting consumes about 34 percent of U.S. electricity and uses about 15 percent of the average household's electricity. Americans could cut their electricity use for lighting in half by switching their most often-used incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescent bulbs.

Compact fluorescents also reduce your waste because they last up to 10 times as long. This will reduce the number of bulbs that you buy and ultimately dispose.

Like fluorescent tubes, compact fluorescents contain mercury. All fluorescent bulbs and tubes must be kept out of our Waste to Energy facility. Even green-tipped and low-mercury lamps contain mercury, which has the potential to be released into the air with exhaust from the facility if they are incinerated with trash.

We recycle all types of fluorescent

lamps at the Recycling Center behind the Department of Public Works on the third Saturday of every month from 9 a.m. to noon. Please do not leave bulbs at other times. The bulbs need to be placed into a special carton to minimize breakage. All of these lamps go to a recycler where the components are separated for reuse—100 percent of these materials are reused to make new products.

Thanks to a program provided by the Waste to Energy facility, Wheelabrator North Andover, the Town of North Andover is reimbursed for all mercury-containing items we recycle. Wheelabrator North Andover is required to set aside a portion of the “tip fee,” the fee which is paid for trash disposal, to pay for mercury-recycling services. These services help keep mercury out of our air and water.

### 3rd Saturday Recycling at DPW

These are the items that are accepted for recycling on the third Saturday of the month at DPW:

- Used motor oil — 50¢/gallon (also collected on the first Saturday)
- TVs and Computer Monitors — \$5 or \$15, depending on size
- Car batteries — \$2

- Propane tanks — \$2
  - Oil-based paint — \$3 per gallon can
  - Fluorescent light bulbs, both tubes and screw-in type — No charge
  - Household batteries (rechargeables, button, NiCd, Nimh, lithium ion) — No charge
  - Scrap metal — No charge
- You can also buy Red Recycling Bins for \$3 each!



# 10 TIPS for a Healthier Home

The chemicals that you use in and around your home affect your budget, your indoor air quality, your family’s safety, and our hazardous waste disposal programs. As you clean, maintain, and improve your home, think about the air you breathe and the water we share.

1. Read the labels on household cleaners and garden chemicals. Look for “signal words.” Signal words tell you how hazardous the product is to humans. Here’s what you need to know: “Poison” means highly toxic. “Danger” specifies that the product is extremely flammable, corrosive, or toxic. “Warning” indicates a moderate hazard. “Caution” denotes a mild to moderate hazard. Seek products with the “lowest” signal word, *caution* or *warning*.
2. Buy only the amount you need! Know how much product it will take to do the job and only buy that amount. It is better to make a second trip to the store than to have to dispose of large quantities of a hazardous chemical at a special collection.
3. Follow instructions on all chemicals carefully. When you are required to mix a chemical with water, don’t guess or dump. Measure the amounts as directed. Dedicate a set of measuring spoons and a measuring cup to use with household or garden chemicals. Be sure to triple-rinse (flush three times with water) your measuring spoons or cups between uses.
4. Store chemicals safely. Children and pets can be easily poisoned or injured by improperly stored chemicals. Be sure to keep all chemicals away from sources of heat, including sun shining into a garage or shed window. The same goes for rags!
5. Consider “home remedies.” For

instance, cooking oil is useful to remove adhesive price tags from jars, mugs, and dishes. Vinegar, baking soda, and soap can be effective cleaning agents. For “recipes,” look for books about “natural cleaning” at the library or search for “Recipes for Natural Cleaners” on the Internet.



6. When you paint, choose latex. Latex is water-based for easier cleanup. Better yet, choose latex without volatile organic compounds (VOCs). VOCs contribute to the formation of indoor and outdoor air pollution. If you have questions about proper disposal of unneeded latex paint, call us.
7. Weed; don’t spray. In addition to reducing your use of pesticides and eliminating hazardous waste, you’ll also be improving your muscles and enjoying the fresh air.
8. When it is time to replace your light bulbs, choose compact fluorescents. They use less energy and last much longer, creating less waste. (Compact fluorescents do contain mercury. So they do require special disposal as hazardous waste when they burn out. Call us for details.)
9. Purchase paper products, such as toilet paper, made from recycled paper. (If you buy paper napkins or paper towels, look for recycled-content paper in those, too!)
10. Check out library and Internet resources. Learn some quick and easy steps to a healthier home.

# Go back to school without breaking the bank!

Whether you’re getting ready for school yourself, getting someone else ready for school, or just taking care of your own end-of-summer shopping, there are ways that you can reduce your waste, improve our environment, and save money, too.

- Plan ahead and make a list. Check to see what you have on hand. After that, make a list of what you really need.
- Reuse what you already own. Check closets for forgotten tote bags, backpacks, lunch boxes, and refillable containers. Go through last year’s supplies to find the basics: scissors, rulers, binders, etc. Many items can be reused from year to year. Remember—reusing your own stuff is also less stressful than hitting the stores.
  - When you do go shopping, browse reused first. Look for used clothes, shoes, appliances, books, toys, games,



Billboards never got so much attention! This “urban bag for the road,” by Vy & Elle, was fashioned from reclaimed billboard vinyl.

office supplies, and household goods through online services such as [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org), at garage sales, or at resale shops.

- Buy recycled by picking up recycled-content paper, pens, pencils, scissors, rulers, file folders, binders, storage containers, and jewelry.
- Purchase refilled or remanufactured ink jet cartridges for your printers. Or, buy a refilling kit and do it yourself.
- Pick up a cool recycled accessory, such as a bag or purse made from a reused vinyl billboard. Look for hip new sustainable products at [www.sustainablestyle.org](http://www.sustainablestyle.org).

# Worth Noting

A plastic cup that will biodegrade in a food waste compost pile? Yes, some exist and more are in development. Research continues on how to make crops such as corn into biodegradable plastic and how best to compost this plastic, which is known as PLA (polylactic acid).

Biodegradable plastics offer two advantages. First, they are made from renewable resources, instead of non-renewable petroleum resources. Second, they are well-suited to food-contact applications where composting is a better option than recycling, such as single-use drink cups, carry-out food containers, and disposable eating utensils.

The Biodegradable Products Institute tests biobased plastics and certifies those that “have been scientifically proven to biodegrade and compost satisfactorily in municipal and commercial composting operations.” The products that meet these criteria receive the Institute’s approval to use the “Compostable Logo.”

Seeing the “Compostable Logo” does NOT guarantee that the item will compost in your backyard bin or that it is accepted by local composting programs. Just as not all items that carry the “recyclable” logo are locally recyclable, biodegradable plastics may not be either. Always check with your hauler or composter before adding a new item!

For more information, visit the Biodegradable Products Institute website, [www.bpiworld.org](http://www.bpiworld.org).



These “leading ladies” from Biocorp sported biodegradable plastic evening gowns at a Hollywood event. (Photo Courtesy of Biocorp, [www.biocorpaavc.com](http://www.biocorpaavc.com))

## QUOTES REQUOTED

To waste, to destroy, our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed.

Theodore Roosevelt 1858-1919

# Cleaning up the Gulf Coast

Late last summer, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit the Gulf Coast with a one-two punch. In their wake, were 300,000 displaced Americans and 75 million cubic yards of waste. This debris, the equivalent of 30 years worth of waste in the Gulf Coast region, included about 350,000 flooded vehicles and at least 25 million cubic yards of green waste (tree limbs, trunks, leaves, and dead bushes).

Much of this debris will be landfilled. However, the automobiles and white goods (large appliances) will be recycled in large numbers. After the first six months of cleanup, about 280,000 tons of steel had already been recycled. Meanwhile, smaller scale efforts are gathering plumbing fixtures, cypress wood, and doors, which will be reusable.

Of particular concern during cleanup is the huge quantity of hazardous waste “orphaned” by the storm, including household hazardous waste. By February, 2 million containers of hazardous waste, a total of more than 10 million pounds, had been collected. Of these, 1.9 million were small containers, many of which were flood-damaged household hazardous materials collected by crews going house to house or dropped off at collection centers by residents.

Preparing your home and family for potential disasters helps minimize waste. For details, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).



Chris Jordan photographed this “Remains of a Business, St. Bernard Parish” while working on his upcoming book, *In Katrina’s Wake: Portraits of Loss from an Unnatural Disaster*. (Photo courtesy of Chris Jordan, [www.chrisjordan.com](http://www.chrisjordan.com))

During hurricane cleanup, this Louisiana site was set up to handle the massive quantity of household hazardous waste. Some of this material was found inside houses, garages, and sheds, but a great deal was recovered from swamps, waterways, and other outdoor areas.



## Healthy Home Resources

Center for a New American Dream  
[www.newdream.org/clean](http://www.newdream.org/clean)

Debra Lynn Dadd, “The Queen of Green”  
[www.debraslist.com/](http://www.debraslist.com/)

Earth Easy’s Guide to Living at Home with the Earth  
[www.eartheasy.com/live\\_menu.htm](http://www.eartheasy.com/live_menu.htm)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s “Do’s and Don’ts Around the Home”  
[www.epa.gov/owow/nps/dosdont.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/dosdont.html)

Green Seal  
[www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org)

LivingHome, an online magazine  
<http://library.livinghome.com/Cool-Tools/>

Project Laundry List  
[www.laundrylist.org](http://www.laundrylist.org)

The Seventh Generation “Guide to a Toxin-Free Home”  
[www.seventhgeneration.com/living\\_green/toxin\\_free.php](http://www.seventhgeneration.com/living_green/toxin_free.php)

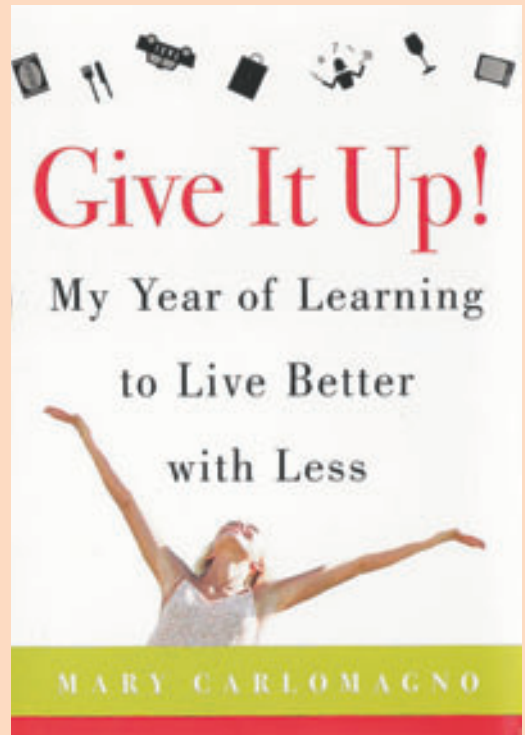
Better Basics for the Home: Simple Solutions for Less Toxic Living  
By Annie Berthold-Bond, Three Rivers Press, 1999

Naturally Clean: The Seventh Generation Guide to Safe & Healthy, Non-Toxic Cleaning  
By Jeffrey Hollender, Geoff Davis, Meika Hollender, New Society Publishers, 2006

# What could you live without?

When I set out to write this book, my intention was to eliminate unnecessary facets of life, in essence to determine what I could live without.

Mary Carlomagno  
“Introduction,” *Give It Up!*



What could you live without? After being hit on the head by boxes of shoes falling from her overfilled closet shelves, author Mary Carlomagno set out to answer this question.

Each month for a year, she gave up something that she valued—something whose sacrifice created for her “a personal and significant ‘ouch’ factor.” Her choices were personal—coffee, reading the newspaper, television, eating out. But the lessons she learned can teach us some things about our own wants and needs.

During the summer, you may take some time off or you may have a different routine. Use some of this time to think about what you could live without. What possessions do you value and which just create clutter? Do you have habits that cost money and create waste?

While setting out to give up something every month for a year may seem daunting, try giving up one of your favorite “wants” for a week or a month. See what you learn about yourself.

## Read more about it!

Remember to look for books at the library, at book swaps, at [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org), or at used bookstores! Then share titles with friends and relatives!

*Choosing Simplicity: Real People Finding Peace and Fulfillment in a Complex World* by Linda Breen Pierce (Gallagher Press, 2000)

*Give It Up!: My Year of Learning to Live Better with Less* by Mary Carlomagno (William Morrow, 2006)

*Living Simply with Children: A Voluntary Simplicity Guide for Moms, Dads, and Kids Who Want to Reclaim the Bliss of Childhood and the Joy of Parenting* by Marie Sherlock (Three Rivers Press, 2003)

*Simplicity Lessons: A 12-Step Guide to Living Simply* by Linda Breen Pierce (Gallagher Press, 2003)

*Voluntary Simplicity: Toward a Way of Life That Is Outwardly Simple, Inwardly Rich* by Duane Elgin (Revised Edition, Harper Paperbacks, 1998)

*What Kids Really Want that Money Can’t Buy: Tips for Parenting in a Commercial World* by Betsy Taylor (Warner Books, 2003)



# Our Fourth Annual Earth Day Cleanup was a HUGE Success

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's Earth Day Cleanup. The weather was beautiful and more than 200 volunteers spread across town to do their part to make North Andover a place to be proud of.

To keep us going, Wild Oats of Andover donated water and healthy snacks including organic bananas, oranges and apples, and yummy cookies.

The dumpsters were donated by Wheelabrator North Andover, as were a volunteer driver (thanks, Tony) and a pickup truck.

We collected 60 cubic yards of litter and large illegally dumped items in some of our more secluded areas of town.

North Andover resident Pete Simonson organized many of his neighbors for a morning of cleanup followed by a BBQ at his home! Twenty adults and youth collected over four dump-truck loads from the Sharpner's Pond Road, Forest Street, Salem Street area. They even got a glimpse of an Eastern Ribbon snake and spotted salamander who were undoubtedly grateful for the cleanup as well.

After the cleanup one resident called Tina Klein to report that Boxford Street hadn't looked this good in 20 years! This excited resident is already looking forward to next year.

Thank you, everyone!

Because of the large number of tires collected, we are considering offering a special collection day for tires. The cost of disposal would be \$2 to \$3 per tire and residents would have to bring tires to a designated location on the collection day. Would this be a service you are interested in? Please let us hear from you by sending an e-mail to [recycle@townofnorthandover.com](mailto:recycle@townofnorthandover.com).



**We want your suggestions, questions and comments!**

**NASWAC**

c/o Department of Public Works

384 Osgood Street

North Andover, MA 01845

(978) 685-0950

[recycle@townofnorthandover.com](mailto:recycle@townofnorthandover.com)

[www.northandoverrecycles.com](http://www.northandoverrecycles.com)

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70% POST-CONSUMER NEWS CONTENT, USING SOY INKS

Please recycle this publication after you have read it!



## Three simple steps for good recycling

Good recycling involves capturing all the recyclables you can, preparing them properly, and placing them into the correct containers. Follow these steps to be a great recycler!

**Step 1: Capture all of your recyclables.** Be sure that all of your recyclable containers and paper get recycled (and don't go into trash cans!). All of these materials can be recycled:

- All plastic food and beverage containers
- All colors of glass, including containers, Pyrex, ceramic, and glass vases (NO plate or window glass)
- Aluminum beverage cans
- Aluminum pie plates and clean aluminum foil
- Metal food and other cans
- Metal jar lids
- All clean paper, including newspaper, magazines, catalogs, office and school papers, mail and envelopes, and flattened corrugated cardboard (maximum 30-by-30 inches)

If you read a magazine at a soccer game, take it home and put it into your recycling bin. (Or, pass it along to a friend and ask her to recycle it after she reads it.) If you take a water bottle with you on a shopping trip, take it home to recycle it afterward. That goes for soft drink and sports drink bottles, too!

Remember to keep recyclables OUT of your trash. Our trash hauler, Waste

Management, has been instructed not to pick up recyclables mixed in trash!

**Step 2: Prepare your recyclables correctly.**

Bottles, jars, and cans should be thoroughly emptied and rinsed. Remove pumps, and discard them with your trash. Remove and recycle plastic or metal lids and caps. Flatten plastic and metal containers whenever possible. They need the room in the collection truck!

Make sure that paper products are clean and dry. Flatten boxes. Don't recycle dirty paper products—such as the newspaper onto which you spilled cereal or the greasy pizza box.

All paper needs to be in paper bags or tied with string. Please do NOT put any recyclables into plastic bags!

**Step 3: Place recyclables into the proper bins and containers.**

Know what to recycle where. Our recycler only wants the materials requested. Only place those items into bins or containers. When you put other materials into the bins, they are considered "contaminants." Sometimes, these contaminants ruin a load of recyclables; other times they have to be sorted out by hand. Either way, they make recycling more difficult and more expensive, while causing the recyclables to be less valuable to the factories that use them to manufacture new products.



**Q:** My Mom is a compulsive saver—she inherited Depression-era saving methods. Anyway, she wanted to know if anyone uses cloth. For example, you have a cotton bathrobe from 1965 and the elastic is shot and it is out of style BUT...it is perfectly good cloth! She asked me about this because she just cannot throw this kind of stuff away.

Joanne Parrill

**A:** This is actually a very good question. Unwearable clothing can be placed in the Planet Aid boxes located at the DPW Recycling Center, BUT you have to separate it from wearable clothing and mark the bag as "unwearable" or "rags."

Planet Aid, and other organizations that collect second-hand clothing, will have some mechanism for recycling stuff they cannot use. I have called and specifically talked to Planet Aid about this issue. They don't mind getting unwearable clothing—as long as it is not mixed in with good clothing. They do not want to spend the labor sorting it.

Unwearable clothing is generally bailed and sold by weight. It is used, for instance, as the shredded stuffing in quilted moving blankets.

So, stained, ripped, no zipper, elastic shot—it can all be recycled.

Unfortunately, your mother's kind are a dwindling breed.

Send your question for Tina to [recycle@townofnorthandover.com](mailto:recycle@townofnorthandover.com).

## No Idle Zone

Vehicle emissions increase ground-level ozone. At ground-level, ozone contributes to formation of the air pollution that we know as "smog." This ozone can also burn the lining of the lungs, much as a sunburn damages the skin. Children, who breathe 50 percent more air by volume than adults, and those with asthma and other chronic lung conditions are at special risk from these emissions.

Did you know that it is illegal to idle your vehicle unnecessarily for more than five minutes? Most people don't. That is why the North Andover Solid Waste Advisory Committee is interested in acquiring the "Idling Reduction Toolkit." This Toolkit, which is made available through the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's Municipal Waste Reduction Grant, assists communities in educating the public about why idling is unhealthy, unnecessary, and illegal. The Toolkit's suggestions include focused attention at schools, posting "No Idle" reminder signs, provided by the grant, at schools and around town, and an education campaign facilitated by the materials provided by the grant.

Are you interested in helping with this effort? Successful programs include a collaboration of several groups from town including the Board of Health, the School Department and the DPW. If our air quality is important to you and you would like to explore the possibility of implementing a program in North Andover, please contact Tina Klein by sending an e-mail to [recycle@townofnorthandover.com](mailto:recycle@townofnorthandover.com).